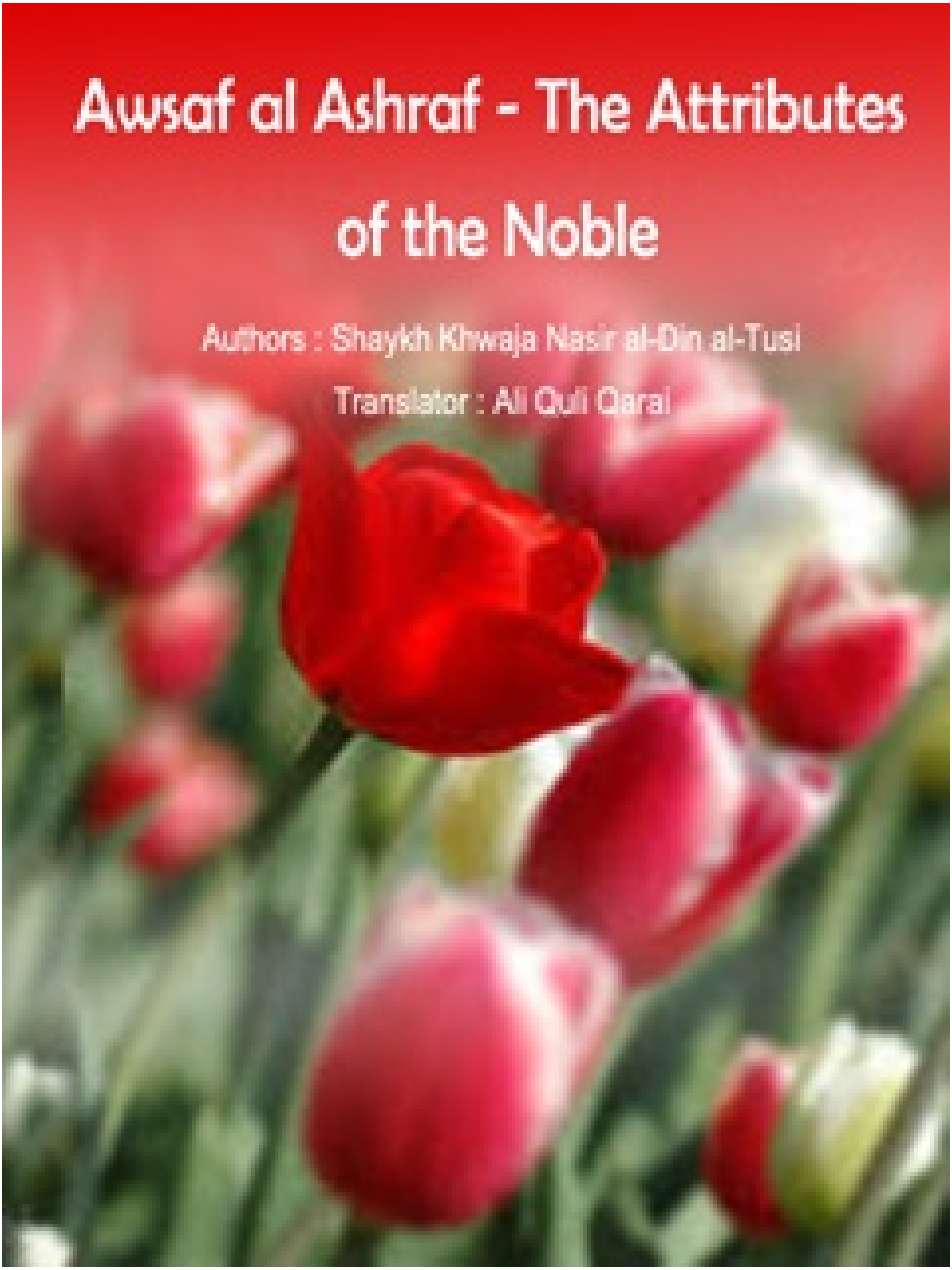

Awsaf al Ashraf - The Attributes
of the Noble
Authors : Shaykh Khwaja Nasir al-Din al-Tusi
Translator : Ali Quli Qarai

بسم الله الرحمن الرحیم

Awsaf al Ashraf – The Attributes of the Noble

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Awsaf al Ashraf – The Attributes of the Noble

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Treatise about the Spiritual journey, its starting point, the removal of obstacles, states of the wayfarer, and attainment of the goal.

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This treatise ascribed to Khwajah Nasir al-Din al-Tusi (۵۹۷-۶۷۲/۱۲۰۱-۱۲۷۳-۴), the well-known philosopher, theologian, and astronomer who lived during the turbulent period of Hulagus invasion of Iran and the fall of the Abbasid caliphate, was written, as indicated in the preface by him, years after his Akhlaq-e Nairi, a classic of Muslim ethics and Persian literature. This translation is based on the edition of the work by Sayyid Mahdi Shams al-Din (Tehran: Sazman-e Chap wa Intisharat-e Wizarat-a Farhang wa Irshad e Islami, ۲nd edition, summer ۱۳۷۰ H. Sh./). The editor has made use of two manuscripts of the work belonging to Ayatullah Najafi Marashi Public Library (one dated ۱۶ Rajah ۱۰۶۴ H. and another without a date), a facsimile edition published in Berlin in ۱۹۲۷ (reprinted ۱۹۵۷), and a printed edition published about the year ۱۹۶۷ by Kitab furushi-ye Islamiyyah, Tehran.

Introduction

point

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

Immeasurable thanks are due to God, Whose reality no intellect can fathom and the knowledge of whose Being no thought or science can apprehend. Any expression describing Him, if affirmative, does not enter the conceiving mind without the traces of anthropomorphism, and if negative, is

not conceived by it in a manner secure from the scandalous negation of attributes .((ta'til

Therefore, the leader of the elect, the exemplar of the saints (awliya') and the Seal of :the Prophets, Muhammad Mustafa, may God bless him and his Household, said

لا أحصى ثناء عليك. أنت كما أثنيت على نفسك, وأنت فوق ما يقول القائلون

I cannot reckon Thy praise. Thou art only as Thou hast praised Thyself, and Thou art (above what the describers say (in describing Thee). (١)

May a myriad fold greetings, kudos, and blessings be upon his sacred soul and on the spirits of the pure ones of his Household, especially the Infallible Imams, as well as !the elect of his Companions, by Thy right, O God

After writing the book entitled Nasirian Ethics (akhlaq-e Nasiri), which discusses the noble dispositions and the sound policies of moral conduct according to the way of the philosophers (hukama'), the writer of this treatise and the author of this discourse, Muhammad al-Tusi, had it in his mind to write a concise treatise describing the ways of the awliya' and the methods of the seers according to the principles of the wayfarers of the Path (tariqah) and the seekers of the Truth (haqiqah) and one based

on the principles of reason and tradition, containing the subtle theoretical and .practical points that constitute the kernel and essence of that discipline

However, countless preoccupations and vain obstacles did not permit him to carry that out, and what he had in mind could not

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Sunan Ibn Majah, ii, ۱۲۶۲, hadith ۳۸۴۱, ed. by Fu'ad `Abd al-Baqi, Beirut: Dar al-Fikr li -۱ .`al-'Taba`ah wa al-Nashr wa al-Tawzi

emerge from potentiality to actuality, until this moment, when this idea materialized at the compelling behest of his honour . . . , the master of the sword and the pen, the elect of the eminent from among the Arabs and the non-Arabs, the sun of the truth and the faith (shams al-haqq wa al-din), the glory of Islam and Muslims, the chief of the viziers, the holder of the high office of the dominions, the pride of the elite and the nobility, the embodiment of justice and benefaction, the world's most meritorious and perfect, the refuge and shelter of Iran, the lover of the awliya', Muhammad ibn Sahib al-Said Baha' al-Din Muhammad al-Juwayni, may God strengthen his helpers and .increase his power twofold

As opportunity became available and time and circumstance became conducive, the plan at last materialized, to the extent that the mind would assist and was feasible in view of the various obstacles and numerous preoccupations, of compiling, in compliance with his order and in obedience to his command, this brief treatise in several chapters, expositing those truths and describing those subtleties. In every chapter, he has for witness' sake cited a verse of the glorious revelation, which is such :that

لَّا يَأْتِيهِ الْبَاطِلُ مِن بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَلَا مِنْ خَلْفِهِ...

(Falsehood cannot find way into it from before it or behind it." (۴۱:۴۲"

And where he could not find something that was expository of the purpose at hand he

has confined himself to that which was more accessible. He has

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named it Awsaf al-ashraf and were it to be viewed with favour by his noble eye, its purpose would be achieved; otherwise, in view of what has been already stated in way of excuse, it is hoped that his noble self, with his noble disposition and sublime virtue, will overlook its lapses and cover them with the mantle of his forgiving grace, so that God, the Glorious and the Exalted, may bestow upon him of divine grace and everlasting sovereignty in the real world in the same way as He has chosen him for mastery and leadership in this realm of appearance. Indeed He is Gracious, and .answers prayer

Prelude

It would be proper at the outset to mention the contents of this brief treatise. There is no doubt that when one contemplates over one's state (reading ahwal, instead of af'al), one would find oneself to be in need of something besides oneself, and that .which is in need of something else is deficient

And when one becomes aware of his deficiency, there arises in his inner being a yearning to seek perfection. This prompts him to undertake a journey in the quest of perfection, which is called `wayfaring' (suluk) by the people of the Tariqah (the mystic .path). And one who desires to undertake this journey stands in need of six things

First, the guidance for this journey and that which is necessary for the journey to be made, and this is similar to the provisions that one needs for a physical

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.journey

.Second, overcoming the hindrances and obstacles in the way of the journey

Third, making the movement which takes one from the starting point to the .destination; it consists of wayfaring and the states of the wayfarer during its' course

Fourth, the states which occur to the wayfarer in the course of his wayfaring from the .start of the journey to the point of destination

Fifth, the states that befall those who have completed the journey (ahl al-wusul) after .wayfaring

Sixth, the end of the journey and the culmination of the way faring which is called .(fana' (annihilation) in tawhid (Divine Unity

Each of these consists of several matters, excepting the end of the journey wherein there is no multiplicity. We shall discuss these six matters in six chapters, each having six sections, with the exception of the last chapter which does not allow of any .multiplicity

It should be known that in the same way as in a physical journey the traversing of every part of the road depends on traversing of a preceding part and is succeeded by another part-excepting the last part-each of these states is an intermediate stage between the end of the preceding stage and the beginning of the next, so that every stage is the sought after goal as its previous stage nears its end and is left behind and .abandoned as one approaches its succeeding stage

Hence every stage is a perfection in relation to its previous stage and remaining in it is a defect when one ought to turn

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to the next desirable stage. Hence the Prophet, may God bless him and his Household, :has said

من استوى يوماه فهو مغبون

(One whose two days are equal is a loser. (۱

:And that is why it has been said

حسبنات الابرار سيئات المقربين

(Merits of the virtuous are vices for the saints. (٢

Concerning the Starting Point of the Journey and its Requisites

point

:This chapter consists of six topics, each of which is discussed in the following sections

(Section one: on faith (iman

(Section two: on steadfastness (thubat

(Section three: on intention (niyyah

(Section four: on truthfulness (sidq

(Section five: on penitence (inabah

(Section six: on sincerity (ikhlas

Section One: On Faith

:God, the Exalted, has said

الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَلَمْ يَلْبِسُوا إِيمَانَهُم بِظُلْمٍ أُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمُ الْأَمْنُ وَهُم مُّهْتَدُونَ

Those who believe and obscure not their faith with wrongdoing, theirs is safety; and" (they are rightly guided." (٦:٨٢

Iman literally means 'affirmation,' that is, believing, and in the terminology of the seers means a particular kind of affirmation, an affirmation of that which is known for .certain and has been declared by the Messenger, may peace be upon him

The knowledge (ma'rifah) of the Prophet is inseparable from the knowledge of the Sustainer, the Powerful, the Knowing, the Living, the Perceiving, the Hearing, and the Seeing One, Who wills and speaks and has sent the Messengers and revealed the Qur'an to Muhammad Mustafa, may God bless him and his Household, and set forth the laws, the duties, and the sunan, the lawful and the unlawful, as affirmed by the

.consensus of the entire Ummah

Hence faith consists of these matters, neither more nor less. For if

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۱- Ibn Abi Jumhur, `Awali al-li'ali, i, ۲۸۴, ed. by al-Hajj Aqa Mujtaba al Iraqi, ۱st edition, ۱۴۰۳/۱۹۸۳, Qum. Matba`ah Sayyid al-Shuhada' `alayh al-salam.

۲- (Al-Fayd al-Kashani, Mahajjat al-bayda', vii, p. ۸۹, from al-Imam al-Sadiq ('a).

lesser, it would not be faith at all, and if more, the increase will be a higher degree of faith, contiguous to faith. And the sign of belief is to know, to say, and to do that which should be known, said, and done and to refrain from that which has been forbidden.

These pertain to righteous conduct and are subject to increase and decrease and are an essential part of the aforesaid affirmation. That is why in all the places the mention of faith is accompanied with that of righteous action, as in the following [Qur'anic] statement

الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ

"Those who believe and perform righteous deeds ..." (۲:۲۵)

And it should be known that faith has various degrees, the lowest of which is verbal confession. The verses:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا آمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَالْكِتَابِ الَّذِى نَزَّلَ عَلَىٰ رَسُولِهِ

"O you who believe, believe in God and His Messenger and the Book that He has sent down on His Messenger." (۴:۱۳۶)

قَالَتِ الْأَعْرَابُ آمَنَّا ۖ قُل لَّمْ تُؤْمِنُوا وَلَٰكِن قُولُوا أَسْلَمْنَا وَلَمَّا يَدْخُلِ الْإِيمَانُ فِى قُلُوبِكُمْ...

The Bedouins say: 'We believe: Say (unto them O Muhammad): 'Ye believe not; but say, "We submit;" for faith has not yet entered into your hearts. (Yet, if you obey God and His Messenger, He will not with-hold from you aught of your deeds. God is indeed

(Forgiving, Merciful.') (۴۹:۱۴

Above that is faith by imitation, which is a convinced affirmation of that which must be affirmed, but it is subject to decline. When convinced affirmation is achieved it

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:is necessarily accompanied by righteous action

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَرْتَابُوا وَجَاهَدُوا...

The (true) believers are those only who believe in God and His Messenger and afterward doubt not, but strive (with their wealth and their lives for the cause o f God. (Such are the sincere.) (۴۹:۱۵

[Superior to this faith in the Unseen, in accordance with [the words of the Qura'an who believe in the Unseen" (۲:۳), which represents inward faith in" يؤمنون بالغيب... transcendence, as if one were affirming something on the other side of a curtain. :Superior to it is the faith of those concerning whom He says

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِرَ اللَّهُ وَجِلَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَإِذَا تُلِيَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتُهُ زَادَتْهُمْ إِيمَانًا وَعَلَى رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ الَّذِينَ يُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ حَقًّا

They only are the (true) believers whose hearts tremor when God is mentioned, and when the revelations of God are recited to them they increase their faith, and in their Lord put their trust, who perform the prayer, and expend of what We have provided them, those in truth are the believers; (they have degrees with their Lord, and (forgiveness and generous provision.) (۸:۲-۳

This is the rank of perfect faith. Next to it is convinced faith, to be explained later on, .and that is the ultimate degree of faith

The minimum degree of faith lesser than which is not appropriate in wayfaring, is faith by imitation and faith in the Unseen, for mere verbal faith is not actually faith. To this refers

:the following statement of the Qur'an

وَمَا يُؤْمِنُ أَكْثَرُهُم بِاللَّهِ إِلَّا وَهُم مُّشْرِكُونَ

And the most part of them believe not in God, but they associate other gods with" (Him." (١٢:١٠۶

Wayfaring with a tranquility of the soul is possible when there is convinced belief in the existence of the absolutely perfect Being, the Creator. The acquisition of such a .belief is extremely simple and can be obtained with a little effort

Section Two: On Steadfastness

:God, the Glorious and the Exalted, has said

يُثَبِّتُ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِالْقَوْلِ الثَّابِتِ فِی الْحَیَاهِ الدُّنْیَا وَفِی الْآخِرَهِ

God confirms by a stable belief those who have faith in the life of the world and in the" (Hereafter . . ." (١۴:٢٧

Unless faith is not characterized by steadfastness, the tranquility of the soul, which is essential for the quest of perfection, is not obtained, because one who is shaky in his belief cannot be a seeker of perfection. The steadfastness of faith depends on .achieving the certitude that there is perfection and the Perfect Being

Without this certitude the quest of perfection does not materialize, and until the resolve to seek perfection and the steadiness of this resolve is not achieved, wayfaring is not possible. One who makes the resolve without being steadfast in it is

like one bewildered whom the devils have kidnapped in the earth" (۶:٧١" ,كَالَّذِی اسْتَهْوَتْهُ الشَّیَاطِینُ فِی الْأَرْضِ حَیْرَانَ)

The bewildered man has no resolve, and until he is resolute enough to advance in a direction, no movement, journey, or wayfaring will take place, and if there is

any movement at all, it is accompanied with anxiety and hesitation and is fruitless and .futile

The cause of steadfastness is an insight into the truth believed in, the delight of having found it, and a perseverance in this state as a habitual condition of the inner self. That is why the performance of righteous works by those who have this .steadfastness is perpetual as well as necessary

Section Three: On Intention

:God, the Exalted, has said

قُلْ إِنَّ صَلَاتِی وَنُسُکِی وَمَحْیَایَ وَمَمَاتِی لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِینَ

Say (O Muhammad), 'Indeed, my prayer and my worship, my living and my dying, are" (for God, the Lord of the Worlds." (٦:١٦٢

Niyyah means intention, and intention is a link between knowledge and action. For unless one knows at first that he has to do something, one cannot intend to do it and .unless there is intention one cannot carry out an act

The starting point in wayfaring is intention, the intention to reach a certain destination, and since the goal is to acquire perfection from the Absolutely Perfect, the intention should be one of acquiring nearness to the Almighty, Who is Absolute .Perfection

Such being the case, intention by itself is better than action when taken alone, for

نیه المؤمن خیر من عمله

(The believer's intention is better than his works. (١

For intention is like the soul and action like the body, and

إنما الأعمال بالنيات

The intrinsic worth of) works only depends on the intentions (that lie behind theme)) [(۲)](#)

that is, the life of the body is through the soul. And [as the Messenger

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.Al-Kulayni, Usul al-Kafi, ii, ۸۴, Beirut -۱

.Ibid, ii, ۲۱۱ -۲

of God has declared

لكـل أمرئ مـانوى فمن كـانت هجرته الى الله ورسوله فهجرته الى الله ورسوله ومن كانت هجرته لـدنيا يصـيبها او أمراه ينكحها فهجرته الى ما هاجر إليه

Every man receives what he has intended: one who has migrated towards God and His Messenger migrates towards God and His Messenger, and one whose migration is to achieve a mundane purpose or to marry a woman, his migration will take him to the (intended goal of his migration. (۱)

A good work accomplished with the intention to seek nearness to God will certainly ,achieve its due perfection, in accordance with the statement of God, the Exalted

لَّا خَيْرَ فِي كَثِيرٍ مِّن نَّجْوَاهُمْ إِلَّا مَنْ أَمَرَ بِصَدَقَةٍ أَوْ مَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ إِصْلَاحٍ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ ۚ وَمَن يَفْعَلْ ذَٰلِكَ ابْتِغَاءَ مَرْضَاتِ اللَّهِ فَسَوْفَ نُؤْتِيهِ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا

There is no good in much of their secret conferences save him who enjoins charity" and propriety and peace-making among the people. Whoso does that, seeking the (good pleasure of God, We shall bestow on him a mighty reward." (۴:۱۱۴

Section Four: On Truthfulness

:God, above all descriptions is He, has said

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَكُونُوا مَعَ الصَّادِقِينَ

O you who believe, observe your duty to God and be with the truthful (al sadiqin)."“

((۹:۱۱۹

Sidq literally means speaking the truth and being true in one's promises. Here by truthfulness is meant the truthfulness of speech as well as that of intention and resolution (`azm) and fulfillment under all circumstances of the promises made by .one

Siddiq is one who is truthful in all these matters as

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.Sunan Ibn Majah, ii, ۱۴۱۳, bab ۲۶, hadith ۴۲۲۷ -۱

a matter of habit, and that which is contrary to fact in whatsoever manner, neither .itself nor its trace is found in him

The `ulama' have said that if one is such his dreams too would be true and come true. :The verse

(مِّنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ) رِجَالٌ صَدَقُوا مَا عَاهَدُوا اللَّهَ عَلَيْهِ...

Among the believers are) men who truly fulfill the promise they have made with)" (God" (۳۳:۲۳

has been revealed concerning them. The truthful have been described as standing in :the same rank as the Apostles and the martyrs

فَأُولَئِكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِم مِّنَ النَّبِيِّينَ وَالصِّدِّيقِينَ وَالشُّهَدَاءِ وَالصَّالِحِينَ...

Whoso obeys God and the Messenger), they are with those unto whom God has)" shown favour, of the prophets, the truthful, and the martyrs and the righteous, (the (best company are they)." (۴:۶۹

And such great prophets as Ibrahim and I'dris have been described as `truthful ones,' :with the words

إِنَّهُ كَانَ صِدِّيقًا نَّبِيًّا

(Indeed, he was a truthful one, a prophet." (١٩:۴١, ١٩:۵۶"

:And concerning others it has been said

...وَجَعَلْنَا لَهُمْ لِسَانَ صِدْقٍ عَلِيًّا

And We bestowed upon them of Our mercy), and assigned to them true and sublime)"
(speech." (١٩:۵٠

And since the straight path is the shortest path to the goal, one who walks straight is .the most likely to reach his intended destination, God willing

(Section Five: On Penitence (Inabah

:God, the Exalted and the Glorious, has said

وَأَنِيبُوا إِلَىٰ رَبِّكُمْ وَأَسْلِمُوا لَهُ...

Turn unto Him penitent, and surrender unto Him, (before there come to you the"
(chastisement, where after you wilt not be helped)." (٣٩:۵۴

Inabah means turning to God and attending to Him. It consists

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of three things. First, turning with one's inner self, so that it is always turned towards God, the Exalted, and to seek nearness to Him in all one's thoughts and intentions, :and to this refer the words

...وَجَاءَ بِقَلْبٍ مُّنِيبٍ

(And comes with a penitent heart." (۵٠:٣٣ . . ."

Second, to attend with one's speech, which means remembering Him and His favours :and to remember those who are nearer to Him, as referred to in this verse

...وَمَا يَتَذَكَّرُ إِلَّا مَن يُنِيبُ

(None pays heed save him who turns penitent (unto Him)." (۴۰:۱۳"

Third, (to turn to Him) in one's outward actions, which means being always watchful of one's acts of obedience and worship.

These must be performed with the intention of seeking nearness, such as the obligatory and the supererogatory prayers, abstaining from things avoided by the leading figures of the faith, giving of charities, showing kindness to God's creatures, procuring the means of their benefit and preventing the causes of their harm, observing of rectitude in dealings, being just in regard to oneself and one's kin, and, in summary, observing the laws of the Shari'ah with the intent of acquiring nearness to God and seeking His good pleasure. Indeed, He, the Exalted, has said:

وَأُزْلِفَتِ الْجَنَّةُ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ غَيْرَ بَعِيدٍ هَٰذَا مَا تُوعَدُونَ لِكُلِّ أَوَّابٍ حَفِيظٍ مَّنْ خَشِيَ الرَّحْمَٰنَ بِالْغَيْبِ وَجَاءَ بِقَلْبٍ مُّنِيبٍ ادْخُلُوهَا بِسَلَامٍ ذَٰلِكَ يَوْمُ الْخُلُودِ لَهُم مَّا يَشَاءُونَ فِيهَا وَلَدَيْنَا مَزِيدٌ

On the day when . . .) the paradise is brought nigh for the God fearing, no longer)" distant. (And

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it is said): This is that which you were promised. (It is) for every penitent and watchful one, who feareth the Beneficent in secret and comes with a penitent heart. Enter it in peace. This is the day of eternity. There they have all that they desire, and there is (more with Us." (۵۰: ۳۰-۳۵

(Section Six: On Sincerity (Ikhlas

God, the Glorious and the Exalted, has said:

...وَمَا أُمِرُوا إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ

And they were not commanded except to worship God, keeping religion pure for Him" (. . . ." (۹۸:۵

Ikhlas in Persian means `vizheh kardan' (`to make exclusive'), that is, to purge a thing of everything else that has mingled with it. That which is meant here is that all of one's speech and action should be for the sake of seeking nearness to God, the Exalted, and exclusively for His sake, without being adulterated with any worldly or otherworldly .purpose

أَلَا لِلَّهِ الدِّينُ الْخَالِصُ...

(Indeed, to God belongs sincere religion." (٣٩:٣"

The opposite of sincerity is that there be some other purpose mingled with it, such as the love of honour and property, good name, or the hope of otherworldly reward, or .salvation and deliverance from the chastisement of hell, all of which are signs of shirk

Shirk is of two kinds: open and concealed. Open shirk is idolatry, and all its other forms consist of concealed shirk. The Messenger of God, may God bless him and his :Household, has said

نیه الشرک فی أمتی أخفی من دبیب النمله السوداء علی الصخره الصماء فی اللیله الظلماء

Amongst

p: ١۴

the people of my Ummah intentions contaminated with shirk are more invisible than (the creeping of a black ant on a black rock in a dark night. (١

Shirk is the most destructive obstacle for the seeker of perfection in wayfaring

فَمَن كَانَ يَرْجُو لِقَاءَ رَبِّهِ فَلْيَعْمَلْ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا وَلَا يُشْرِكْ بِعِبَادَةِ رَبِّهِ أَحَدًا

So let him who hopes for the encounter with his Lord, work righteousness, and not" (include in his Lord's service anyone." (١٨:١١٠

And when the obstacle of concealed shirk is removed, wayfaring (suluk) and :attainment (wusul) become easy

من اخلص لله أربعين صباحا ظهرت ينابيع الحكمه من قلبه على لسانه

If one is sincere to God for forty days, springs of wisdom, emanating from his heart, (become manifest in his speech. (٢

.And safety from sin comes from God

On the Removal of Obstacles and Hindrances from the Wayfarer's Path

point

:This chapter consists of six sections

.(Section one: on repentance (tawbah

.(Section two: on abstinence (zuhd

.(Section three: on poverty (Faqr

.(Section four: on self-discipline (riyadah

.(Section five: on self-scrutiny and watchfulness (muhasabah and muraqabah

.(Section six: on Godfearing (taqwa

Section One: On Repentance

:God, the Blessed and the Exalted, has said

...وَتُوبُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا أَيُّهَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ

And repent you unto God together, O believers, in order that you may succeed."" ((٢٤:٣١

The meaning of tawbah is turning away from sin. One must first know what is sin in order to turn away from it. It should be known that the actions of people are of five :kinds

.First, those which must be done and which it is not proper to omit

Second, those which must not be done and which it is not proper to

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.Al-Majlisi, Bihar al-anwar, Ixix, ۹۳, Beirut -۱
.Ibid., Ixvii, ۲۴۲ -۲

.do

.Third, those are better done than omitted

.Fourth, those which are better omitted than done

.Fifth, those doing or not doing which is equal

Sin consists of not doing acts of the first kind and committing acts of the second kind, .and it is a duty of all sane people to repent on committing all acts of this kind

And here that which is meant are not only acts of speech and those performed by bodily members but also all acts of thinking, speaking, and acting that are subject to .the power and will of every sane person

As to the omission of acts of the third kind and commission of acts of the fourth, they represent a breach of etiquette (tark-e awla), which is reprehensible for the Infallible Ones (ma'sumun, i.e. the prophets and their awsiya'), and their repentance is for .commission of tark-e awla

For the wayfarers, it is sin to attend to other than God, the Exalted, Who is their .cherished goal, and they should repent on perpetrating it

Hence repentance is of three kinds: the common repentance of the generality of people, the special (khass) repentance of the infallible ones, and the exclusive (akhass) repentance of the people of the path. The repentance of the sinners of the .ummah pertains to the first category

The repentance of Adam, may peace be upon him, and other prophets belongs to the

second category. And the repentance of our Messenger, may God bless him and his Household, belongs to the third category, in regard to

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:which he said

وإنه ليغان على قلبه وإنى لأستغفر الله فى كل يوم سبعين مره

Indeed, physical nature casts its shadow upon my heart and I seek God's forgiveness (seventy times in a day. (۱

.As to the repentance of the common people, it depends on two conditions

The first condition is the knowledge of the various categories of action, as to which action is conducive to the attainment of perfection and which action results in .deficiency and loss

And this perfection varies with different persons; for some it is deliverance from punishment, and for some it is achievement of reward, and for some it is attainment .of the Creator's good pleasure and nearness to Him

The deficiency and loss also varies likewise; either it is liability to punishment, or deprivation from reward, or the displeasure of the Creator and farness from Him, the .latter being the state of the accursed

The second condition is awareness of the benefit that lies in attaining perfection and the good pleasure of God, the Exalted, and the harm in incurring loss and earning His .displeasure

Hence every sensible person who fulfils these two conditions would not sin and would .repent should he perpetrate any

Further, repentance consists of three things, (۱) one of which relates to the past, (۲) .another to the present, and (۳) a third to the future

As to that which relates to the past, it consists of two things. (a) First, remorse for the sin committed by him in the past and regret for it, a regret that

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.Sahih Muslim, iv, ۲۰۷۵ -۱

is as complete as possible. This kind entails the two other things and that is why it has been said that الندم توبه `(۱)`. Remorse is repentance)

b) The second thing is to compensate for the past conduct, and this has three) .aspects

.i) One of them relates to God, the Exalted, Whom one has disobeyed)

ii) The second relates to one's own self, which was subjected by one to harm and the) .displeasure of God, the Exalted

iii) The third relates to the other person who has been harmed by one's word or deed,) and as long as the other person is not restituted his rights, repentance does not materialize. The restitution of his right can be made either by apologizing or by .accepting retributive action, or by doing something which will obtain his satisfaction

This means actually restituting his right or compensating him, or someone who represents him, for that breached right, or accepting his retributive action, or that of someone who represents him, and bearing the punishment that has been prescribed .for that offense

If the other person is one who has been killed, obtaining the satisfaction of his heirs is also part of the condition, for it is impossible to obtain the satisfaction of that man. If all the other requisites of repentance have been realized one may hope to be .absolved in the Hereafter by God, the Exalted, with His all-inclusive mercy

ii) As to the rights of one's own self, that has to be compensated for)

.Al-Majlisi, al-Bihar, Ixxiv,۱۵۹ -۱

.by accepting the prescribed punishment in the world or the Hereafter

i) As to the Godward aspect of the matter, its requisites can hopefully be achieved by) turning to God with lamentation and tears, and by devoting oneself to worship and austerities after obtaining the satisfaction of the victim and restituting the rights of .one's own self

As to the aspect of repentance that relates to the present, it consists of two things. (۲) One of them is to refrain from perpetrating the sin in which one has been engaged for the sake of attaining nearness to God. The second is to make the other victim of the sin secure from one's misconduct and to compensate him for the harm that has been .inflicted upon him

As to the aspect relating to the future, that also consists of two things. One of them (۳) is to make a firm resolution not to commit it again, so much so that one would not commit a like sin, either voluntarily or under duress, even if one were to be killed or .burnt

The second is to remain steadfast in that resolve; for it happens that one who resolves on something is not secure against relapse. With the means of pledges and atonements, or some other of the various deterrents to resumption of sin, one should try to remain steadfast in one's resolution. And as long as one is hesitant and there is .likelihood of resumption, steadfastness has not been realized

And in all these matters one's

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intention should be the attainment of nearness to God and obedience of His :commands so that one becomes one of those concerning whom it has been said

التائب من الذنب كمن لا ذنب له

(One who repents for a sin is like one who has not sinned. (١)

These are the requisites of the common repentance from sins, and it is about this group that it has been said:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا تُوبُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ تَوْبَةً نَّصُوحًا عَسَىٰ رَبُّكُمْ أَن يُكَفِّرَ عَنكُمْ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ...

"O you who believe! Turn unto God in sincere repentance. It may be that your Lord will remit from you your evil deeds . . ." (۶۶:٨)

And also:

إِنَّمَا التَّوْبَةُ عَلَى اللَّهِ لِلَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ السُّوءَ بِجَهَالَةٍ ثُمَّ يَتُوبُونَ مِن قَرِيبٍ فَأُولَٰئِكَ يَتُوبُ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ...

"Forgiveness is only incumbent on God towards those who do evil in ignorance (and) then turn quickly (in repentance) to God. These are they toward whom God relents . . ." (۴:١٧)

And as to the special kind of repentance, which is for commission of tark-e awla, its requisites can be understood from that which has been mentioned in this regard. In this relation it has been said:

لَّقَد تَّابَ اللَّهُ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ وَالْمُهَاجِرِينَ وَالْأَنصَارِ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُ فِي سَاعَةِ الْعُسْرَةِ...

"God has accepted the repentance of the Prophet, and the Muhajirun and the Ansar who followed him in the hour of hardship ..." (٩:١١٧)

As to the exclusive repentance (of the wayfarers), it relates to two things. One of them is repentance for the wayfarer's paying heed to anything other than the

١- Al- Kulayni, Usul al-Kafi, ii, ۴٣۵.

cherished goal, and that is why it has been said:

اليمين والشمال مضلتان

(Deviance it is (to turn) to the right and the left. (1)

the second thing relates to repentance for retreating to a previous stage from which one must have gone forward, or for halting in the present stage, or considering that stage with satisfaction with the aim of halting in .All these are sins for this group, and :that is why it has been said

حسنات الأبرار سيئات المقربين

.The merits of the virtuous are vices for the saintly

They ought to repent for this sin, seek God's forgiveness abstain from persistence, be remorseful for past lapses, and plead in the presence of the Creator, the Exalted, the .Holy, and the Pure

من تاب وأخلص سره لله فالله له

.Whoever repents and purifies his soul for the sake of God, God shall be his

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ التَّوَّابِينَ وَيُحِبُّ الْمُتَطَهِّرِينَ

(Indeed God loves the repentant and those who take care for purity." (٢:٢٢٢"

Section Two: On Zuhd

God, the Exalted, says

وَلَا تَمُدَّنَّ عَيْنَيْكَ إِلَىٰ مَا مَتَّعْنَا بِهِ أَزْوَاجًا مِّنْهُمْ زَهْرَةَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا لِنَفْتِنَهُمْ فِيهِ ۚ وَرِزْقُ رَبِّكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَىٰ

Stretch not thine eyes to that We have given pairs of them to enjoy-the flower of the" present life, that We may try them therein; and thy Lord's provision is better and (more enduring." (٢٠:١٣١

Zuhd is the absence of desire and the zahid is someone who is not fond of such mundane things as food and drink, dress and housing, other objects of appetite and pleasure, property and status, good name, proximity to

.Nahj al-balaghah, khutbah ۱۶, p. ۵۰, ed. by Muhammad `Abduh -۱

rulers and influence, and every other thing that would depart from him at the time of .death

This absence of love for mundane matters is neither because of incapacity or ignorance about them, nor for any purpose or reward. Someone who has this quality .is a zahid in the above mentioned sense

However, a real zahid is one whose zuhd, as described, is not accompanied even with the hope of deliverance from the chastisement of hell or the reward of paradise, but solely for the sake of restraining his soul after knowing the benefits and .consequences of each of these things mentioned

His zuhd is habitual and is without any trace of greed, hope or expectation, worldly or otherworldly. This quality becomes habitual by means of restraining the soul from seeking pleasures, and by making it accustomed to austerities so that indifference to .desire becomes firmly established in it

In one of the anecdotes of the ascetics it is related that there was a man who had been selling the stew of sheep's head and paludah (a sweet beverage made of starch .jelly) for thirty years without ever tasting any of them

Asked the reason for this austerity, he replied, "When my soul desired these two things, I told it that it would never get any of them if it were to touch any of them. I did ".that so that it would not incline towards any pleasure whatsoever

One who adopts zuhd in the world with the hope of deliverance or reward

in the Hereafter is like one who, out of his base disposition, abstains from eating food for days despite great hunger in order to eat to his fill at an expected feast. Or he is

.like a tradesman who does barter to make a profit out of his merchandise

In wayfaring, the benefit of zuhd lies in the curtailment of preoccupations, so that the wayfarer is saved from being preoccupied with anything that would keep him from .reaching his goal

(Section Three: On Poverty (Faqr

:God, the Exalted, has said

لَّيْسَ عَلَى الضُّعَفَاءِ وَلَا عَلَى الْمَرْضَىٰ وَلَا عَلَى الَّذِينَ لَا يَجِدُونَ مَا يُنفِقُونَ حَرَجٌ

Not unto the weak nor unto the sick nor unto those who can find naught to spend is" (any fault (if they are true to God and His Messenger) . . .". (۹:۹۱

The faqir is someone without means or someone who has less than his minimum needs. However, in this context 'faqir' is one who has no love of property and .mundane things, and if he were to obtain any he is not keen to keep it

That is not out of ignorance or incapacity or some handicap or negligence, nor for .coveting some other advantage

It is not for the sake of status, for earning a name for being good and generous, nor for fear of the tortures of hell or hope of the rewards of the Hereafter, but due to the need to be free from diversions, which is necessary for attentive wayfaring on the ,path of Reality and concentrating on the Divine

so that anything that is apart from God, the Exalted, does not become an obstacle in .his way. And, in fact, this poverty is a branch of zuhd

(The Prophet, may God bless him and his Household, once said (to his Companions

ألا أخبركم عن ملوك الجنه؟

"?Do you want me to tell you concerning the princes of the people of paradise"

,They replied, “Yes.” Whereupon he said

كل ضعيف مستضعف أغبر أشعث ذى طمرين لا يؤبه له أقسم على الله لأبره

They are the weakest (of their society dusty, with disheveled hair, putting on two worn out pieces of clothing for dress, but who, nevertheless, were they to swear by (God (to do something) would fulfill their oath. (١)

And when the Prophet himself was told, “If you wish, We shall fill the Baths and ,Makkah for you with gold,” he replied

لا, بل أجوع يوما فاسألك وأشبع يوما فأشكرك

No. Rather would I prefer to pray to Thee when I am hungry and to thank Thee when .I satisfy my hunger

(Section Four: On Self–Discipline (Riyadah

:God, the Exalted and the Glorious, has said

وَأَمَّا مَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِ وَنَهَى النَّفْسَ عَنِ الْهَوَىٰ فَإِنَّ الْجَنَّةَ هِيَ الْمَأْوَىٰ

But as for him who fears the Station of his Lord and forbids the soul its caprice, surely“ (Paradise shall be the refuge.” (٧٩:۴٠-۴١

Riyadah' literally means the breaking in of a horse or mule by restraining it from' carrying out its undesirable inclinations and habituating it to obey its master and to .carry out his purposes

In the present context, riyadah means restraining the animal soul from

.Sunan Ibn Majah, ii, ١٣٧٨; Musnad Ahmad ibn Hanbal, v, ۴٠٧ -١

following its instincts of Desire and Irascibility and that which is associated with them, and deterring the rational soul from obeying animal instincts and restraining it from

vicious dispositions and conduct, such as greed, acquisitiveness, ambition, and their associated characteristics such as cunning, deceit, fraud, backbiting, prejudice, anger, hatred, envy, and vice, and that which takes an evil or some other form, and habituating the human soul to such conduct as would lead it to the perfection it is .capable of

That which follows the faculty of Desire is called the `bestial' (bahimi) soul; that which follow the Irascible faculty is called `predatory' (sabu'i), and that which is habituated to vicious dispositions is called `satanic,' and these are together referred to as the `inciting soul' in the Qur'anic revelation (ammaratun bi al-su', mentioned in ١٢:٥٣), that .is, a soul that incites one to evil should these vices have become permanent in it

But if they have not become permanent, it would sometimes incline to evil and sometimes to good, and when it inclines to good it would feel remorse and blame .(itself. Such a soul is called the 'blaming soul' (al-nafs al-lawwamah

A soul that is submissive to the intellect and habituated to seeking what is good is .(named the 'contended soul' (al-na f s al-mutma'innah

The purpose of self-discipline is threefold: First, the removal of obstacles, including outward and inward preoccupations, from the way towards God. Second, the subjugation of the animal soul to the practical intellect, which motivates the quest for .perfection

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And third, habituating the human soul to remaining steady in the condition that prepares it for the reception of Divine effusion, so that it may attain to the perfection .that is possible for it

(Section Five: On Self-Scrutiny (Muhasabah) and Watchfulness (Muraqabah

:God, the Exalted, has said

...وَإِن تُبْدُوا مَا فِى أَنفُسِكُمْ أَوْ تُخْفُوهُ يُحَاسِبْكُم بِهِ اللَّهُ...

Whether you make known what is in your souls or hide it, God will bring you to“ (account for it.” (۲:۲۸۴

Muhasabah means taking account, and muraqabah means being watchful. In the present context it means taking account of one's acts of obedience and sinfulness to see which of them are more. If the acts of obedience are more, he should see where these remaining acts of obedience stand in relation to the bounties bestowed upon .him by God, the Exalted

In this regard, first he should consider his own existence and the numerous benefits that relate to the creation of his bodily members. The scholars of anatomy have compiled numerous books describing them to the extent of their understanding, .although what they have understood is not even a drop out of an ocean

He has placed in man's being several benefits relating to his faculties of growth and movement and fashioned numerous subtleties of creation in his soul, which is capable of knowledge and apprehends the intelligibles with its essence, perceives the .perceptible, and governs the body's functions and organs

He has ordained his sustenance from the beginning of creation and fashioned the means of his growth and development all the way from the

.highest to the lowest planes

Hence, if one were to compare his extra acts of obedience with these above-mentioned bounties and other innumerable bounties besides them, concerning which :He has stated

وَإِن تَعُدُّوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ لَا تُحْصُوهَا

(and if you count the bounty of God, you shall not be able to reckon it . . .” (۱۴:۳۴ . .“

.he would come to realize his own nonfeasance under all circumstances

And if his acts of obedience and sins be equal, he should know that he hasn't performed any act of service in return for these bounties and his nonfeasance is all .the more evident

!And should the extent of his sins be preponderant, woe to him! Woe to him

Hence whenever the seeker of perfection takes this account of himself, nothing except obedience will come out of him and he would consider himself at default even :if he were to do nothing but obey, and this is why it has been said

حاسبوا أنفسكم قبل أن تحاسبوا

(Take any account of yourselves before you are called to give account. (١)

And if one does not take one's own account and continues to remain in sinfulness, he will encounter the day when he will be subjected to reckoning in accordance with (the :(Qur'anic statement

وَإِن كَانَ مِثْقَالَ حَبَّةٍ مِّنْ خَرْدَلٍ أَتَيْنَا بِهَا ۗ وَكَفَىٰ بِنَا حَاسِبِينَ

And We set a just balance for the Day of Resurrection so that no soul is wronged in)" aught). Though it be of the weight of a grain of mustard seed, We shall bring it. And

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.Al-Majlisi, al-Bihar, Ixvii, ٧٣ -١

(We suffice as reckoners" (٢١:۴٧

and face painful chastisement and great loss when

...وَلَا يُقْبَلُ مِنْهَا شَفَاعَةٌ وَلَا يُؤْخَذُ مِنْهَا عَدْلٌ...

nor will intercession be accepted from it, nor will compensation be received from it . . ." (..."(٢:۴٨

.May God save us from that

As to muraqabah, that consists of being watchful over one's outward and inner being so that one does not perpetrate anything that would annul his good works. That is, one should constantly be watchful over one's states so that one does not fall into sin, open or secret, and so that any preoccupation, significant or trivial, does not keep him :from journeying on the path of Truth. He should always keep this verse in his mind

وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِى أَنفُسِكُمْ فَاحْذَرُوهُ

(know that God knows what is in your souls, so beware of Him . . . ." (٢:٢٣٥ . . ."

until he reaches his sought destination. And God grants success to any of His servants .that He wishes, and He is'All-Subtle and All-knowing

(Section Six: On Godfearing (Taqwa

:God, the Glorious and the Almighty, has said

إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِندَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ

Verily, the more honoured amongst you in God's sight is the one who is more" (Godfearing amongst you." (٤٩:١٣

Taqwa' means refraining from sin with the fear of God's displeasure and drifting away from Him. In the same way as a sick person seeking health, in order to achieve health and cure his disease, has to refrain from what is harmful for him and would exacerbate his sickness, so also a deficient being in the quest

p: ٢٨

of perfection should avoid everything that is contrary to perfection or an obstacle in its way, or which would divert its attention from wayfaring on the path of perfection, in order that that which is essential or conducive to wayfaring be beneficial and :effective

وَمَن يَتَّقِ اللَّهَ يَجْعَل لَّهُ مَخْرَجًا وَيَرْزُقْهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَحْتَسِبُ

And whosoever fears God, God will appoint a way out for him, and will provide for him"

(from whence he has no expectation." (۶۵:۳

in reality, taqwa consists of three things: one is fear, the second is avoidance of sins, .and the third is the desire for attaining nearness to God

Each of these three will be fully explained in its proper place in this brief treatise. That which has been said in the (Qur'anic) Revelation and the traditions concerning taqwa and in the praise of the muttaqun (Godfearing) far exceeds what can be mentioned in .this brief discourse. And the end of all goals is the love of the Exalted Maker

بَلَىٰ مَنْ أَوْفَىٰ بِعَهْدِهِ وَاتَّقَىٰ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَّقِينَ

Nay, but (the chosen of God) is he who fulfils his pledge and fears God; indeed, God" (loves the God fearing." (۳:۷۶

On Wayfaring in the Quest of Perfection, and the States of the Wayfarer

point

:This chapter consists of six sections

(Section one: on solitude (khalwah

(Section two: on contemplation (tafakkur

(Section three: on fear (khawf

('Section four: on-hope (raja

(Section five: on patience (sabr

(Section six: on thankfulness (shukr

Section One: On Solitude

:God, the Exalted, says

وَذَرِ الَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا دِينَهُمْ لَعِبًا وَلَهْوًا وَغَرَّتْهُمُ الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا

And leave alone those who take their religion for a pastime and a jest, and whom the“ life

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(of the world has deceived ...” (۶:۷۰

In the sciences of reality it has been established that every being that has the preparedness to receive Divine effusion (fayd-e ilahi) cannot be deprived of it when the preparedness exists and any obstacles are absent. However, one can seek the .benefit of Divine effusion only when one knows two things

First, one should have convinced belief and a faith free of doubt in the existence of that effusion. Secondly, he should know that the existence of this effusion in every .being will lead to its perfection

The knowledge of these two matters is at all times an essential part of preparedness .for receiving that effusion

Now that this preliminary fact is known, it may be stated that the seeker of perfection, after acquiring preparedness, is now obliged to remove the obstacles. The biggest of these obstacles are the unnecessary engagements that direct the soul's attention .toward other-than-God and keep it from attending fully to its real goal

These preoccupations pertain either to the external senses, or the inner perceptual faculties, or some of the vital faculties, or illusory thoughts (afkar-e majazi, as .(opposed to waridat-e haqiqi, mentioned hereafter

As to the outer senses, their preoccupation lies in infatuation with viewing attractive forms and shapes, listening to harmonious sounds and [pursuing] other objects of .smelt, taste and touch

As to the inner perceptual faculties, their preoccupation lies in imagining forms and .states that absorb attention

It may be an imaginary love, or enmity, an exaggerated delight or an

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underscored loss, an imagined order or disorder, or some memory of a past condition, .or the thought of some object of desire, such as wealth and status

As to the vital faculties their preoccupation may be caused by grief, fear, jealousy, or shame, anger or lust, or some treachery, an expected pleasure, or the hope of .overpowering some enemy or avoiding something painful

As to illusory thoughts, preoccupation with them lies in reflecting on insignificant matters, or devoting oneself to some non-beneficial science or anything .preoccupation with which keeps one from one's desired goal

Khalwah means the avoidance of all these obstacles. Hence one seeking khalwah should try to be free of inward and outward sensory preoccupations and to discipline his animal faculties, so that they don't divert him toward things which, being compatible with these faculties, prompt him to avoid that which is not attuned to .them

He should refrain totally from illusory thoughts, which are thoughts whose goal is attainment of good things of the life of the world and the Hereafter. The good things of worldly life are ephemeral, and as to the goods of the Hereafter, their goal is the .attainment of lasting pleasures for the ego seeking them

After removing the outer obstacles and freeing the inner self from preoccupation with anything other than Allah, one should direct all his concern and his undivided intention to being watchful over the happenings of the Unseen' (sawanih ghaybi) and being ,(vigilant over real intuitions (waridat-e haqiqi). That is called contemplation (tafakkur

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.which shall be dealt with in a separate section which follows

Section Two: On Contemplation

:God, the Exalted and the Glorious, says

أَوَلَمْ يَتَفَكَّرُوا فِی أَنفُسِهِم ۗ مَّا خَلَقَ اللَّهُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ

Haven't they pondered within themselves? God created not the heavens and the" (earth, and that which is between them, except with the Truth... ?" (۳۰:۸

Although many meanings have been ascribed to [the term] tafakkur, their essence is that contemplation is an inward journey of humanity from the preliminaries (mabadi) to the goals (maqasid). The same sense is ascribed to nazar in the terminology of .scholars

None can make the transition from deficiency to perfection without undertaking this journey, and hence it has been said that the most essential of obligations is contemplation and thought. The instances of encouragement given to contemplation :in the [Qur'anic] Revelation are countless

إِنَّ فِی ذَٰلِکَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ

(And in that are signs for a people who think." (۱۳:۳"

:And it has been stated in hadith

تفکر ساعه خیر من عباده سبعین سنه

(An hour's contemplation is better than seventy years of worship. (۱

One should know that the starting point from where this journey should commence are 'the horizons and the souls' (afaqq wa anfus; ۴۱:۵۳). It is a rational journey (sayr-e istidlali: lit. 'evidence-seeking journey') guided by the signs (ayat) pertaining to each of .the two

That is, the wisdom found in every particle of these two realms of being (kawn) guides to the greatness and perfection of their Originator, until one witnesses the light of His creativity in every

.Al-Majlisi, Bihar al-anwar, vol. ۶۸, p. ۳۲۷ -۱

:individual particle

سَنُرِيهِمْ آيَاتِنَا فِي الْآفَاقِ وَفِي أَنفُسِهِمْ حَتَّىٰ يَتَبَيَّنَ لَهُمْ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ

We shall show them Our Signs on the horizons and in their selves until it is manifest" .(unto them that it is the truth." (۴۱:۵۳

And after that is attaining to the witness of Divine Glory over everything else from :among the creation

أَوَلَمْ يَكْفِ بِرَبِّكَ أَنَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ

(Does it not suffice that thy Lord is witness over all things?" (۴۱:۵۳ . . ."

.so that its manifestation in every particle is disclosed

As to the 'signs on the horizons,' they pertain to the knowledge of all existents apart from God as they really are, and the wisdom in each being, perceivable in accordance with human capacity, such as [is disclosed by] the science of astronomy, the [study oft the heavens, the stars and the motions and configurations of each of them, the measurements and dimension of bodies and their properties, the science of the lower world, the compositions and interactions of elements in respect of form and quality, the formation of dispositions, the composition of mineral, plant and animal constitutions and formations, the celestial and terrestrial spirits, the sources of motion of each of them and that which occurs in them and is caused by them of the contraries and opposites, as well as their specific and common properties, and the .relevant sciences of numbers, quantities, and that which pertains to them

As to the signs `within the soul,' they pertain to the sciences of the bodies and the souls, known

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through the study of anatomy of simple tissues, such as bones, muscles, nerves, and

veins and that which is beneficial for them, such composite organs as the main and subservient members and the auxiliaries of each of them, the bodily members and the study of the faculties and actions of each of them and their states, such as health and disease, the science of the soul and the character of its relation to the body, their actions and mutual interactions, the causes of deficiency and perfection of each of them and the factors responsible for their worldly or otherworldly felicity and wretchedness and all that which pertains to these. These constitute the preliminaries .of this journey of contemplation

As to the goal and destination of this journey-as will be known in later chapters and .sections-it is the attainment of the ultimate degree of perfection

Section Three: On Fear and Grief

:God, the Glorious and the Exalted, says

وَخَافُونِ إِن كُنتُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ

(And fear Me if you are believers." (٣:١٧٥"

Grief relates to that which is`(الحزن على ما فات والخوف مما لم يأت :The `ulama' have said .('gone, and fear to that which has not yet come

Hence grief is the inner pain felt on account of the occurrence of something undesirable that cannot be avoided or for the loss of an opportunity or something .desirable which cannot be restituted

Fear is the inward pain felt on account of some expected undesirable occurrence whose causes are probable, or due to expected loss of something desirable and .sought after which cannot be restored

Further, if

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the causes are certain to occur or very likely, it is called anxiety and involves greater

pain. And if these causes are known to he unavoidable, the pain resulting therefrom is 'called ` fear caused by melancholy

The fear and grief felt by the wayfarers is not without benefit, because if the grief be on account of commission of sins, or due to lost opportunity, as a result of past negligence of worship (`ibadah) or cessation of wayfaring in the path of perfection, .that could prompt one to resolve on penitence

And if the fear be due to commission of sin, the incurring of loss, or failure to attain to the rank of the virtuous, that could result in the endeavour to acquire virtue and .induce one to set out on the path of perfection

ذَٰلِكَ يُخَوِّفُ اللَّهُ بِهِ عِبَادَهُ ۚ [يَا عِبَادِ فَاتَّقُونِ]

That is wherewith God frightens His servants:[“O My servants, so fear you Me!]” “ ((۳۹:۱۶

:One who is free from fear and grief at this stage is one of the hardhearted

فَوَيْلٌ لِّلْقَاسِيَةِ قُلُوبُهُم مِّن ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ فِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ

Then woe unto those whose hearts are hardened against remembrance of God.“ (Such are in manifest error.” (۳۹:۲۲

Any sense of security at this stage that removes this fear from the heart is :destructive

أَفَأَمِنُوا مَكْرَ اللَّهِ ۚ فَلَا يَأْمَنُ مَكْرَ اللَّهِ إِلَّا الْقَوْمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ

Do they feel secure against God's devising? None feels secure against God's devising“ (but the losers.” (۷:۹۹

:However, as to the perfect, they are free from this kind of fear and grief

أَلَا

إِنَّ أَوْلِيَاءَ اللَّهِ لَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ

(Surely God's friends-no fear shall be on them, neither shall they sorrow." (١٠:٦٢"

Although 'khawf' and 'khashiyyah' are synonymous lexically, in the terminology of this group (i.e. the gnostics) there is a difference between the two, 'khashiyyah' being ,('reserved for those who know ('ulama

إِنَّمَا يَخْشَى اللَّهَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ الْعُلَمَاءُ

(Even so only those of His servants fear God who have knowledge." (٣٥:٢٨"

:and their paradise too is exclusive

ذَٰلِكَ لِمَنْ خَشِيَ رَبَّهُ

(that is for him who fears his Lord." (٩٨:٨ . . ."

:(and they are devoid of any fear (khawf

لَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ

(No fear shall be on them, neither shall they sorrow." (١٠:٦٢ . . ."

Hence khashiyyah is a feeling of awe arising from consciousness of the awe-inspiring greatness of the Truth, Majestic and Exalted, and awareness of one's inadequacy and shortcoming in serving Him, or due to an imagined lapse in the etiquette of servanthood, or a breach in necessary obedience. That khashiyyah is a special kind of :[fear is indicated by [the following Qur'anic verse

وَيَخْشَوْنَ رَبَّهُمْ وَيَخَافُونَ سُوءَ الْحِسَابِ

(and fear their Lord, and dread the evil [outcome of] reckoning." (١٣.٢١ . . ."

:And rahbah is close to khashiyyah

هُدًى وَرَحْمَةٌ لِّلَّذِينَ هُمْ لِرَبِّهِمْ يَرْهَبُونَ

(a guidance and mercy unto all those who hold their Lord in awe". (۷:۱۵۴ . . ."

And when the wayfarer attains to the station of rida (satisfaction), his fear is turned . (into security (amn

أُولَئِکَ لَهُمُ الْأَمْنُ وَهُم مُّهْتَدُونَ

to them belongs the [true] security, and they are . . ."

p: ۳۶

(the guided." (۶:۸۲

Then he is neither repelled by anything repulsive nor attracted by anything desirable, and this security is due to perfection. And if the aforementioned security he due to deficiency, the possessor of this security does not become free from khashiyyah until illuminated by the vision of Unity (wahdah), whereat there remains no trace of .(khashiyyah, for khashiyyah is associated with plurality (takaththur

Section Four: On Hope

:God, the Glorious and the Exalted, says

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا وَجَاهَدُوا فِی سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أُولَئِکَ يَرْجُونَ رَحْمَتَ اللَّهِ

But the believers, and those who emigrate and struggle in God's way-those have" (hope of God's compassion . . ." (۲:۲۱۸

Whenever something desirable is expected to be achieved in the future and the seeker considers the actualization of its causes as likely, there arises in his heart a feeling of delight, intermingled with expectation of success, from the idea of its .acquisition; it is called hope

And should one know for certain that the causes have materialized and that which is expected would of necessity occur in the future, it is called `waiting' for the object .sought after, and, to be sure, the delight in that case is greater

And if the materialization of the means of attainment be not likely, it is called 'wishing' .((tamanna

And if the achievement of the means be known to be impossible and unlikely, should .there still remain an expectation of achieving, that hope is either illusion or folly

Fear and hope are opposites. In wayfaring, hope, like fear, has many benefits, for hope causes progress in

:the degrees of perfection and rapidity of movement on the path towards the goal

...يَرْجُونَ تِجَارَةً لَّن تَبُورَ لِيُوَفِّيَهُمْ أُجُورَهُمْ وَيَزِيدَهُم مِّن فَضْلِهِ...

They look for a commerce that comes not to naught, that lie may pay them in full . . ." (their wages and enrich them of His bounty . . ." (۳۵:۲۹-۳۰

And hope is the cause of optimism in the forgiveness and pardon of the Creator, the :Glorious and the Exalted, and trust in His mercy

أُولَٰئِكَ يَرْجُونَ رَحْمَتَ اللَّهِ...

(those have hope of God's compassion." (۲:۲۱۸ . . ."

:And in respect of attainment of the goal as a result of this expectation, He has said

أنا عند ظن عبدى بى

(I deal with My servant in accordance with what he expects of Me. (۱

:The absence of hope at this stage results in despair and loss of hope

...إِنَّهُ لَا يَيْأَسُ مِن رَّوْحِ اللَّهِ إِلَّا الْقَوْمُ الْكَافِرُونَ

Do not despair of God's mercy;] of God's mercy no one despairs, excepting the]" (unbelievers." (۱۲:۸۷

. Iblis was eternally damned on account of this despair

لَا تَقْنَطُوا مِن رَّحْمَةِ اللَّهِ

(Do not despair of God's mercy." (۳۹:۵۳ . . ."

However, when the wayfarer attains to the station of gnosis (ma'rifah) his hope disappears, for he knows that he deserved whatever has actualized and that which .did not materialize wasn't deserved

In view of this, should hope still remain, that is either due to ignorance of all that is deserved and not deserved, or an account of a grudge against the Cause of all causes (musabbab al-asbab) for depriving one from one's

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.Ibid., vol. ۶۸, p. ۳۸۵ -۱

.cherished goal

From the previous section it was known that the wayfarer is not devoid of fear and :hope as long as he is in the state of wayfaring

...يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ خَوْفًا وَطَمَعًا

(They call on their Lord in fear and hope ..." (۳۲:۱۶ . . ."

Hope accompanies fear, and it is not possible for one side to preponderate over the other, far one who listens to the verses bearing the promise and the threat, while he scrutinizes the symptoms of deficiency and perfection, with the likelihood of one rather than the other, knows shat the end of wayfaring might be either realization of :the goal or failure and deprivation

لو وزن خوف المؤمن ورجاؤه لاعتدلا.

(Should the believer's fear and hope be weighed, they would be found to be equal. (۱)

.Should hope be preponderant, it would imply a misplaced sense of security

أَفَأَمِنُوا مَكْرَ اللَّهِ

(Do they feel secure against God's devising?" (٧:٩٩"

:And if fear be preponderant, it would result in a despair leading up to perdition

إِنَّهُ لَا يَيْأَسُ مِن رَّوْحِ اللَّهِ إِلَّا الْقَوْمُ الْكَافِرُونَ

Verily of God's mercy no man despairs, excepting the people of the unbelievers." ..."
((١٢:٨٧

Section Five: On Patience

:God, the Glorious and the Exalted, says

وَاصْبِرُوا ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ

(and he patient; surely God is with the patient." (٨:۴۶ . . ."

Sabr (patience) in the lexicon means restraining the soul from anxiety at the time of occurrence of something undesirable, and that consists of keeping the inner self from agitation and restraining one's tongue from complaint and the bodily members from .untoward movements

Patience is of three

.Ibid., vol. ٧۵, p. ٢۵٩ -١

:kinds

First is the patience of the common people, and that involves restraining the soul in the path of forbearance and showing steadiness in enduring, so that one's apparent :condition appears to be satisfactory to the mentally mature and ordinary people

يَعْلَمُونَ ظَاهِرًا مِّنَ الْحَيَاهِ الدُّنْيَا وَهُمْ عَنِ الْآخِرَهِ هُمْ غَافِلُونَ

They know an outward part of the present life, but of the Hereafter they are" (heedless." (۳۰:۷

Second is the patience of the ascetics (zuhhad) and the devout ('ubbad), the God-fearing and the forbearing, in expectation of an otherworldly reward:

إِنَّمَا يُوَفَّى الصَّابِرُونَ أَجْرَهُم بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ

"Surely the patient will be paid their wages in full without reckoning." (۳۹:۱۰)

Third is the patience of the gnostics (`urafa), as some of them feet pleasure when something undesirable befalls them, for they think that the Worshipped One, may His remembrance be glorified, has singled them out of His servants to bear that affliction and that He has graced them with a fresh care:

...وَبَشِّرِ الصَّابِرِينَ الَّذِينَ إِذَا أَصَابَتْهُم مُّصِيبَهٌ قَالُوا إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ أُولَئِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ صَلَوَاتٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَرَحْمَهٌ

". . . and give thou good tidings unto the patient who, when they are visited by an affliction, say, 'Surely we belong to God, and to Him we return'; upon those rest blessings and mercy from their Lord,[and those -they are the truly guided]" (۲:۱۵۵-۱۵۷)

It is reported in traditions that Jabir ibn `Abd Allah al-Ansari, one of the eminent companions [of the Prophet (s)], was afflicted with weakness and decrepitude late in life. Muhammad ibn 'Ali ibn al-Husayn,

known as [al Imam] al-Baqir [may peace be upon him], went to pay him a visit and inquired concerning his state [of health].

Jabir replied, "My state is such that I prefer old age to youth, illness to health, and death to life!"

Muhammad [`a] said to him, "As for me, should He make me old, I would prefer old

age; should He keep me young, I would prefer youth; should He make me ill, I would prefer illness; should He make me healthy, I would prefer health; should He make me ":to die, I would prefer death; and should He kelp me alive, I would prefer life

When Jabir heard this, he embraced Muhammad ['a] on his face and said: "True was the Messenger of Allah [s] who said to me, `You shall see one of my sons who will be my namesake. He shall plough [the fields of] knowledge thoroughly as the oxen plough the earth" For this

(يبقر العلم بقرا كما يبقر الثور الارض)

reason he was called "Baqir `ulum al-awwalin wa al-akharin" (`the plougher of [the .('fields of] the sciences of the ancients and the later generations

An understanding of these ranks [of patience] discloses that Jabir enjoyed the station of patience and Muhammad ['a] the station of satisfaction (rida). Rida' will be .explained later on, God, the Exalted, willing

Section Six: On Thankfulness

:God, the Glorious and the Exalted, says

وَسَنَجْزِی الشَّاکِرِینَ

(And we shall reward the thankful." (۳:۱۴۵ . .."

Shukr" in the lexicon is the approbation given to a benefactor (mun'im) for the sake of"

p: ۴۱

his favours (niam), and since most of the bounties, or rather all of them, are from God, .the Exalted, the best of things is to engage in thanking Him

Thanksgiving entails these things: First, the knowledge of the Benefactor's favours, .'which extend all the way from `the horizons' to `the souls

.Second, the feeling of delight on attaining those favours

Third, making an effort, within the limits of possibility and one's capacity, to obtain the satisfaction of the Benefactor. That consists of: loving Him inwardly; praising Him, by word and deed, in a way that is worthy of Him; and endeavouring to conduct oneself vis-a-vis the Benefactor in a way commensurate with His station, through obedience .and by confessing one's inability to do that

:God, the Exalted, says

لَئِن شَكَرْتُمْ لَأَزِيدَنَّكُمْ

(If you are thankful, surely I will increase you ..." (۱۴:۷"

Faith consists of two halves: `(الإيمان نصفان, نصف صبر ونصف شكر :And it is stated in a tradition patience and thankfulness'). (۱) That is because the wayfarer is never without a state which is either agreeable or disagreeable. He should be thankful for that which is agreeable and patient in bearing that which is disagreeable. In the same way as impatience is the opposite of patience, ingratitude is the opposite of thankfulness. :(Infidelity (kufr) is a kind of ingratitude (kufran

وَلَئِن كَفَرْتُمْ إِنَّ عَذَابِى لَشَدِيدٌ

(but if you are thankless My chastisement is surely terrible." (۱۴:۷ . . ."

From this it is known that the station of thankfulness is above that of patience. And as gratitude cannot

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.Ali al-Muttaqi al-Hindi, Kanz al-'ummal, vol. ۱, p. ۳۶` -۱

be expressed except with the heart, the tongue and the other members, each of them being a bounty from Him and the capacity to employ them an additional bounty, should one want to express gratitude for every bounty, one shall have to thank again .for this bounty and this would entail an endless expression of gratitude

Hence that which is better is to begin and end thanksgiving with the admission of

inability. The confession of the inability to thank is the ultimate degree of gratitude, in the same way as the confession of the inability to praise Him is the ultimate degree of :magnification. That is why it has been said

لا أحصى ثناء عليك, انت كما أثنيت على نفسك وفوق ما يقول القائلون.

Thy praise cannot be encompassed; Thou art as Thou hast praised Thyself and above (what the speakers say sin praising Thee. (١

For the people of submission (ahl al-taslim), gratitude ceases, for gratitude depends on the [idea of] restituting and compensating the Benefactor, and one who has reached such a point in servitude as to consider himself noshing, how can he place himself before Someone Who is everything? Hence the ultimate point of gratitude is until where one considers oneself to be an existent and the Benefactor to be another .existent

On the States That Occur During Wayfaring Before the Attainment of the Goal

point

:This chapter consists of six sections

(Section one: on aspiration (iradah

(Section two: on longing (shawq

(Section three: on love (mahabbah

(Section four: on knowledge (ma'rifah

(Section five: on certainty (yaqin

.(Section six: on rest (sukun

Section One: On Aspiration

:God, the Glorious and the Exalted, says

وَاصْبِرْ نَفْسَکَ

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.Ibn Majah, Sunan, vol_ ۲, p. ۱۲۶۲, hadith ۳۸۴۱ -۱

مَعَ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُم بِالْغَدَاهِ وَالْعَشِيِّ يُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَهُ

And be patient thyself with those who call upon their Lord at morning and evening,“ .(aspiring for His Face . . .” (۱۸:۲۸

:Iradat' in Persian means `desiring' (khwastan), and it entails three things`

,i) awareness of the object sought

,ii) awareness of the perfection that it possesses

.iii) absence of access to the object of desire

Hence if the desired goal is something that is attainable by the seeker and the aspiration is accompanied with the power [to realize it], these two would lead to the .attainment of the goal of aspiration

And if it be something that is realized and existent but not present, these two would .lead to the realization of the goal

Hence if there is a delay in realization (wusul), seeking leads to a state called `longing' .(shawq) in the aspirer. Longing precedes realization

And if realization be gradual, the effect it produces is called `love' (mahabbah), which has several degrees, the ultimate degree of it being al the time of complete .realization and the end of wayfaring

As to the aspiration associated with wayfaring, it is entailed, in a sense, by the wayfaring itself, for the desire for perfection is a kind of aspiration, and when aspiration ceases, either as a result of attainment or due to the knowledge of

.impossibility of realization, wayfaring also terminates

This aspiration associated with wayfaring is particular to the deficient; and as to the .perfect, their aspiration is identical with perfection itself and the goal sought

It is mentioned in traditions

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that there is a tree in paradise called Tuba, and whoever has a desire and aspiration for something it is immediately delivered to him from that tree without any delay or (waiting. (۱

And it has been said that some people are rewarded for their acts of obedience in the (Hereafter, (۲)whereas for some their deeds themselves are their own reward. (۳

This also affirms that aspiration and the goal of aspiration are identical for some people, for aspiration ceases for one who attains to the station of rids in wayfaring. :One of the adept who sought this station said

لو قيل لى ما تريد, أقول: أن لا أريد.

If I were asked, "What do you aspire to?" I would say: "My aspiration is to have no ".aspiration

Section Two: On Longing

:God, the Glorious and the Exalted, said

وَلِيَعْلَمَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ مِن رَّبِّک فَيُؤْمِنُوا بِهِ فَتُخْبِتَ لَهُ قُلُوبُهُمْ

and so that they who have been given knowledge may know that it is the truth . . ." (from-thy Lord and believe in it, and so their hearts be humble unto Him . . . " (۲۲:۵۴

Longing (shawq) is finding the pleasure of love, mixed with the pain of separation, that accompanies intense desire. In the state of wayfaring, longing is necessary after the intensification of desire. At times longing is attained before wayfaring when

consciousness of the ultimate goal is attained without the power to make the journey .and with loss of patience over separation

As much as the wayfarer progresses in this journey, his longing increases and

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.Majma' al-bahrayn, vol. ۲, p. ۱۱۰ -۱

This is a reference to verses ۴:۱۲۴ and ۳:۱۹۵, and the tradition ۳۶ of Bihar al anwar, -۲ .vol. ۷۷, p

This is a reference to verses ۳:۳۰ and ۹۹:۷ and the Prophet's tradition reported in -۳ .Kanz al-'ummal, hadith ۳۸۹۶۳

patience diminishes, until he reaches the goal, whereafter the pleasure of attaining .perfection becomes pure and free from the traces of pain and longing

There are people of the Path who call the vision of the Beloved as `longing,' and this is in the sense that (the wayfarer] seeks union (ittiharl) and has not yet reached shat .station

Section Three: On Love

:God, the Glorious and the Exalted, has said

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يَتَّخِذُ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ أَندَادًا يُحِبُّونَهُمْ كَحُبِّ اللَّهِ ۖ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَشَدُّ حُبًّا لِّلَّهِ

And amongst men there are those who take to themselves compeers apart from" God, loving them as God is loved; but those that believe love God more ardently." ((۲:۱۶۵

Love (mahabbah) is an ecstatic feeling occasioned by some perfection, or imagination .of some perfection, real or supposed, in the object of consciousness

From another aspect, love is the inclining of the soul towards something consciousness of which is accompanied by some pleasure or perfection. And since the pleasure of perception is associated with realization of perfection, love is not devoid

.of actual or imagined pleasure

Love is subject to strength and weakness. Its first stage is aspiration, for aspiration cannot be without love, and thereafter it is proportionate to the longing. With complete realization, whereas aspiration and longing cease, love becomes .predominant

As long as there remains a trace of otherness between the seeker and the Sought, .love remains fixed, ` ishq being extreme love

And it may be that the seeker and the Sought are united while being distinct in some aspect. And as this aspect

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of distinction) disappears, love ceases. Hence the ultimate stage of love and 'ishq is) .union

The philosophers say that love is either innate (fitri) or acquired (kasbi). Innate love is present in all existents, for the heaven (falak) possesses a lave that impels it to its motion. Every element that seeks a natural location possesses a love of that location. The same applies to love in other natural states pertaining to position, quantity, action .and reaction

It is also present in compounds, such as in the magnet which attracts iron, and to a greater degree in plants, wherewith they make movements leading to growth, .nourishment, production of seeds and procreation

In animals it is greater than in plants, as is displayed in their affection and friendly feeling for those of their own kind, the affinity for the opposite sex, and affection for .offspring and other members of the species

However, acquired love is predominant in the human species and its cause pertains to :three things

.First, pleasure, physical or non-physical, imaginary or real

Second, benefit, which is also either illusory-as in mundane love, whose benefit is .accidental-or real, whose benefit is essential

Third, the similarity of substance, which is either commonplace-such as between two persons of similar dispositions and temperaments, who are delighted by each other's dispositions, characteristics, and conduct-or special, as between the men of God (ahl-.a haqq) and the love of the seeker of perfection for the absolutely perfect One

The causes of love may at times be composed of two or three of these

.causes

Love may also derive from gnosis (ma'rifah), and since the gnostic receives all pleasure, benefit, and good from the Absolutely Perfect, he attains to the love of the Absolutely Perfect, which surpasses all other loves, and herewith is disclosed the :meaning of

الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَشَدُّ حُبًّا لِّلَّهِ...

(those that believe love God more ardently." (۲:۱۶۵ . . ."

The mystics (ahl-e dhawq) say that hope and fear, longing and intimacy, expansion (inbisat), trust (tawakkul), resignation (rida'), and submission (taslim) are all essential elements of love, for love at the aspect of the Beloved's compassion inspires hope, fear at the aspect of His awe, longing at non-attainment ('adam-e wusul), intimacy (uns) with the achievement of realization, expansion with exceeding intimacy, and trust with confidence in His care, resignation with relishing everything that He makes to occur, and submission at the aspect of one's inadequacy and inability and His .perfection and omnipotence

Real love is coextensive with submission (taslim) when [the wayfarer] knows the Beloved to be the absolute sovereign and himself as the absolute subject [of His sovereignty]. Real 'ishq is coextensive with fana' when he sees the Beloved as

everything and himself as nothing. For those who possess this station, everything other than God is a veil, and the ultimate goal of the journey is to turn away from all to :attend to Him

وَإِلَيْهِ يُرْجَعُ الْأَمْرُ كُلُّهُ

(To Him the whole matter shall be returned...." (۱۱:۱۲۳"

Section Four: On Gnosis

:God, the Glorious and the Exalted, has said

شَهِدَ اللَّهُ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ وَأُولُو الْعِلْمِ قَائِمًا بِالْقِسْطِ

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لَا إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ

God hears witness that there is no god but He-and the angels, and men possessed of" knowledge-upholding justice; there is no god but lie, the All- mighty, the All-wise." ((۳:۱۸

Ma'rifah means knowledge, and here that which is meant is the highest degree of the .gnosis of God, for the gnosis of God has many levels

The degrees of gnosis have an analogy in fire, which may be known to some people through hearsay as an existent that reduces to nothing anything that comes into contact with it and affects everything shat is near it, as something that is not diminished by anything that may be taken away from it, and whose nature is opposed :to that which is distinct from it, and that such an existent is called `fire

In respect of the knowledge of God, the Exalted, those who arc such are called imitators (muqallid), such as those who affirm the statements of authorities in this .regard without considering any proof

And some are at a level higher than this group and their analogy is that of those who on confronting the smoke arising from fire know that this smoke arises from

.something. Thereupon they infer that there is an existent whose effect is the smoke

In gnosis, those whose analogy is such are the speculative thinkers (ahl-e nazar) who know through conclusive proofs that there is a Creator, the effects of Whose power .bear evidence of His existence

Above this level are those who have felt the

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heat of fire by being near it and having benefited from it. In gnosis, those of this rank .are the believers in the Unseen, who know the Creator from behind a veil

Above this level are those who see the fire and their eyes behold other existents in its light. This group, in respect of gnosis, consists of the seers who are called gnostics .(('urafa'), and it is they who possess true knowledge (ma'rifah

Others who have higher ranks above this level arc also reckoned as gnostics, and they are called `the people of certainty' (ahl al-yaqin). We shall discuss certainty and ,those who possess it hereafter

And of them is a group whose knowledge is of the category of direct vision, and they are called `the people of presence' (ahl al-hudur) and to them belong special intimacy .((uns) and ecstasy (inbisat

The ultimate degree of gnosis is where the gnostic ceases to exist, like something .burnt away in fire and reduced to nothing

Section Five: On Certainty

:God, the Glorious and the Exalted says

وَبِالْآخِرَةِ هُمْ يُوقِنُونَ...

(and they are certain of the Hereafter." (۲:۴ . . ."

:It is stated in a hadith

من أعطى اليقين ومن أوتى حظه منه لا يبال بما انتقص من صلاته وصومه.

One who is given certainty, and the one who partakes of it, does not worry about the deficiency of his prayer and fasting. (1)

Yaqin in common usage means an indestructible resolute belief corresponding to fact. In reality it comprises of the knowledge of the known object and the knowledge of the impossibility of that which

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1- Al-Fayd al-Kashani, Mahajjat al-bayda ; vol. ۷, p. ۱۰۶.

contradicts the former knowledge.

There are various planes of certainty and the Qur'anic revelation mentions `knowledge of certainty' ('ilm al-yaqin), 'eye of certainty' ('ayn al yaqin), and 'truth of certainty' (haqq al-yaqin) as in the following verses:

كَلَّا لَوْ تَعْلَمُونَ عِلْمَ الْيَقِينِ لَتَرَوُنَّ الْجَحِيمَ ثُمَّ لَتَرَوُنَّهَا عَيْنَ الْيَقِينِ

"No indeed; (did you know with the knowledge of certainty you shall surely see Hell.) Again, you shall surely see it with the eye of certainty." (۱۰۲:۵-۷)

وَتَصْلِيَةُ جَحِيمٍ إِنَّ هَٰذَا لَهُوَ حَقُّ الْيَقِينِ

"But if he be of them that cried lies, and went astray, there shall be a hospitality of (boiling water) and the roasting in Hell. Surely this is the truth of certainly." (۵۶:۹۴-۹۵)

In the analogy of fire mentioned in the section on gnosis, whatever is seen by the means of the light of the fire is like `the knowledge of certainly' ('ilm al-yaqin).

The immediate vision of the substance of fire, which is the source of light that shines on everything capable of being illuminated, is like `the eye of certainly' (`ayn al-yaqin), and that which is enveloped by the fire, its identity so consumed by it that what remains is the fire itself, is `the truth of certainty' (haqq al-yaqin).

Although fire stands for punishment, but since ultimate union with it results in the annihilation of the essence of the one who unites with it, its sight from far, from near, and entry into it-the latter resulting in the annihilation of everything that is other than the fire-correspond to these three stations. And

p: ٥١

.God knows best the realities of things

Section Six: On Rest

:God, the Exalted, has said

الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَتَطْمَئِنُّ قُلُوبُهُم بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ ۗ أَلَا بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ الْقُلُوبُ

Those who believe, their hearts are at rest in God's remembrance. Indeed. God's" (remembrance gives tranquility to the hearts." (١٣:٢٨

Rest is of two kinds, one which is characteristic of the deficient, prior to wayfaring, when its subject is unaware of perfection and the goal. That is called negligence (ghaflah). The other is the one attained after wayfaring and is characteristic of the .(perfect on reaching the goal, and is called tranquillity (itminan

The state between these two states of rest is called movement, journey, and wayfaring. Movement is necessarily associated with love prior to realization, and rest .(is associated with gnosis, which is coextensive with realization (wusul

i.e. The gnostic لو تحرك العرف هلك ولو سكن المحب هلك For this reason it has been said that would perish were he to cease moving. Some have even gone beyond this state to i.e The gnostic would perish if he were toلو نطق العارف هلك ولو سكت المحب هلكstate that .speak and the lover if he were to cease speaking

.These are the states of the wayfarer until he attains realization. And God knows best

Concerning the States of Those Who Attain Realization

point

:This chapter consists of six sections

(Section one: on trust (tawakkul

(Section two: on resignation (rida

(Section three: on submission (taslim

Section four: on tawhid

Section five: on ittihad

.Section six: on wahdah

Section One: On Tawakkul

:God, the Glorious and the Exalted says

وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَتَوَكَّلُوا إِن كُنتُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ...

Put you all your trust in God, if you"

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(are believers." (۵:۲۳

Tawakkul means to entrust someone with something. Here tawakkul on behalf of a servant means his entrusting his affairs to God, the Exalted, with the conviction that He has greater wisdom and power to determine them according to His providence, :and to be happy and satisfied with that which He does and determines

وَمَن يَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ فَهُوَ حَسْبُهُ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بَالِغُ أَمْرِهِ

And whoever puts his trust in God, He shall suffice him. Indeed God attains His" (purpose." (۶۵:۳

Satisfaction with that which God does and causes to happen is attained by reflecting on one's past condition, when He brought one into existence when one knew nothing.

Then He fashioned numerous signs of His wisdom in his creation, so much so that one would not be able to know one out of a thousand of them in a lifetime.

Then, without any prior request, He brought him up taking care of everything related to his inward and outward aspects, wherewith he can survive and grow from deficiency to perfection. [Were one to reflect upon these facts], he would know that whatever will happen in the future also will not be without His providence and will.

Thence he would trust Him, the Exalted, and would not worry regarding the remaining matters, being certain that that which has to be accomplished will be done by God, the Exalted, whether he feels agitated or not, because:

من انقطع إلى الله كفاه الله كل مؤنته ورزقه من حيث لا يحتسب.

When someone puts all his trust

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in God, God takes care of all his needs and provides him in a manner that he does not reckon. (۱)

Tawakkul does not imply refraining from making effort with the excuse that one has left the matter to God. Rather, it means that one should have the conviction that everything other than God is from God and that there are many things that happen in the world that occur in accordance with their conditions and causes.

That is because when the power and will of Cod, the Exalted, make one thing rather than some other happen, that is inevitably in accordance with the conditions and means associated with that which takes place.

Hence one should consider oneself, as well as one's knowledge, power and will-all of them-to be a part of the conditions and means associated with the occurrence of some matters that one attributes to oneself.

Hence one should devote greater effort to matters wherein one's will and effort form a part of the conditions and causes of their realization-like one through whom a work

.assigned to him by his Master, Creator and Beloved, is accomplished

Such a view reconciles jabr (predestination) and qadar (total freedom), which arc brought into harmony, for if that work be attributed to the Creator, it would entail jabr .and if ascribed [exclusively] to its conditions and means that would imply qadar

But if the matter is viewed correctly, it will be seen that neither jabr is absolute nor qadar, and one would discover the

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.Tafsir nur al-Thaqalayn, vol. ۵, p. ۳۵۷ -۱

:truth of this statement

لا جبر ولا تفويض بال أمر بين الأمرين.

Neither predestination nor independence of causal efficiency, but a middle position (between the two. (۱)

Thus one should consider oneself to be effective (mutasarrif) in actions attributed to oneself, with the efficiency of the means, not the efficiency of the agent in relation to the means. In fact, these two considerations-one of which is in relation to the agent .[and the other in relation to the means-come together [in a synthesis

Thus everything derives from the agent without the means abandoning its mediating character. This point is extremely subtle and cannot be arrived at except with the .exertion of the intellectual faculty

Whoever arrives at this point will know for certain that the destiny (muqaddar) of all beings is one: that everything that happens comes into existence at a particular time through particular means and causes in particular conditions, and any haste in making .it happen or an effort to delay it beyond its time is ineffectual

He will know himself to be a part of the conditions and means [necessary for their occurrence], freeing himself from attachment to the matters of the world, to

concentrate on that which relates specifically to himself rather than to something :else. Thereat he would realize the real meaning of the statement

أَلَيْسَ اللَّهُ بِكَافٍ عَبْدَهُ

(Does not God suffice His servant?" (۳۹:۳۶"

And thereupon he would be one of the mutawakkilun (those who put their trust in God), and it is about him and the like of

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.Bihar al-anwar, vol. ۵, p. ۱۷ -۱

:him that this verse has been revealed

...فَإِذَا عَزَمْتَ فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَوَكِّلِينَ

and when thou art resolved, put thy trust in God; surely God loves those who put ..." (their trust [in Him]." (۳:۱۵۹

Section Two: On Rida

:God, the Glorious and the Exalted, has said

لِّكَيْلَا تَأْسَوْا عَلَىٰ مَا فَاتَكُمْ وَلَا تَفْرَحُوا بِمَا آتَاكُمْ

That you may not grieve for what escapes you, nor rejoice in what has come to you ..." (. . ." (۵۷:۲۳

Rida is gratification and its fruit is love. It entails the absence of resentment, outward and inward, in the heart, in speech and action. Those who are preoccupied with the outward (ahl-e zahir) are eager that God, the Exalted, be pleased with them, that they .may remain secure from His wrath and punishment

The seekers of the Truth (ahl-e haqiqat) are eager that they may remain pleased with God, the Exalted, so that none of such various states as life and death, survival and

annihilation, pain and comfort, felicity and wretchedness, prosperity and poverty be contrary to their desire, leading them to prefer one of them to the other, for their .knowing that all of them are from the exalted Creator

The love of God, the Exalted, is fixed in their nature, and hence they do not seek anything beyond what He wills and determines and are well-pleased with whatever .befalls them

It is related of one of the sages who possessed this station that in seventy years of a lifetime he never said when something happened "Had it not

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.happened!" nor "Had it happened!" when something didn't

And a sage when asked concerning the effect of rida he had found within himself answered, "I do not find any trace of rida within myself. Yet, if I were to be made into a bridge extending over the hell and all the creation, from the first to the last, were to pass over me into paradise and I alone were consigned to hell, it would never occur to ".me why I didn't receive what others did

And when the equality of the different aforementioned states becomes well-established in one's nature, that which happens accords wish his real desire. Hence it has been said that `Everyone gets what he deserves and deserves what he gets.' For one who has found the Truth, God's good-pleasure with a servant is realized when :the servant's good pleasure with God is obtained

رَّضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ

(God being well-pleased with them and they well-pleased with Him ..." (۵:۱۱۹"

Hence whenever one has an objection concerning the occurrence of something, whatsoever that may be, or when there is a probability of its coming to one's mind, .one would be devoid of the station of rida

One who possesses the station of rida is always in a state of ease, for he has no

preferences or reservations, or rather his preferences accord with all that happens :and doesn't happen

وَرِضْوَانٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ

(and God's good-pleasure is greater ....” (٩:٧٢ . . .“

That is why the angel who is the keeper of the paradise is

p: ٥٧

:called Ridwan and it has been said

الرضا بالقضاء باب الله الأعظم

(Satisfaction with fate is the greatest door to A١١ah, (١

for everyone who attains to rida reaches paradise and whatever he beholds is seen in :the light of Divine mercy, and

المؤمن ينظر بنور الله الأعظم

(The believer sees with the greatest light of Allah.(٢

As God, the Exalted, is the creator of all existents, were He to dislike something it would be impossible for it to come into existence. And since He has not disliked anything, [the wayfarer] is well-pleased with everything [that comes into existence], :not regretting anything that doesn't occur, nor feeling elated by that which does

إِنَّ ذَٰلِكَ مِنْ عَزْمِ الْأُمُورِ

(Surely that is true constancy.” (٣١:١٧“

Section Three: On Taslim

:God, the Glorious and the Exalted, has said

فَلَا وَرَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ حَتَّىٰ يُحَكِّمُوكَ فِيمَا شَجَرَ بَيْنَهُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يَجِدُوا فِي أَنفُسِهِمْ حَرَجًا مِّمَّا قَضَيْتَ وَيُسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا

But no, by thy Lord! they will not believe till they make thee the judge regarding the" disagreements between them and then find in themselves no impediment touching (thy verdict but surrender in full submission." (۴:۶۵

Taslim means submission, and here it means the wayfarer's surrendering to God .everything that pertains to himself

This station is higher than that of tawakkul, for in tawakkul the matter is entrusted to God in a manner something is entrusted to a trustee (wakil), a state wherein one still considers the matter as pertaining to oneself. In taslim this attachment is severed so that the wayfarer considers every matter related to himself as pertaining totally to .Him

This

.Al-Barqi, Kitab al-mahasin, p. ۱۳۱ -۱
.Bihar al-anwar, vol. ۶۷, p. ۷۳ -۲

station is also above rida, for in rida everything that God does accords with one's inclination, whereas in this station one's inclination and that which agrees with it or is against it is surrendered in its totality to Gad, so that one has no more any inclination .whatsoever for anything to agree with it or be against it

then find in themselves no impediment touching then(لا- يجدوا فى انفسهم حرجا مما قضيت but surrender in full') يسلموا تسليما) verdict') this pertains to the station of rida, and as to .submission') that refers to a station higher than it

And when the Truth-seeking wayfarer peers into himself with a truth-finding eye, he does not consider either ride or taslim as his (ultimate] limit, for in each of these two stations he has placed himself vis-a-vis God, the Exalted, with Whom he is well-pleased and Who is well-pleased with him, as if he were the giver and God the .receiver. These distinctions disappear at the station of tawhid

Section Four: On Tawhid

:God, the Exalted and the Glorious, says

ولَّا تَجْعَلْ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَٰهًا آخَرَ

(And set not up with God another god ...." (۱۷:۲۲"

Tawhid means `to consider one' and `to make one.' In the first sense tawhid in the sense of affirming shat God, the Exalted, is One-is a prerequisite of faith, the starting point of gnosis

...إِنَّمَا اللَّهُ إِلَٰهٌ وَاحِدٌ...

(God is only one god." (۴:۱۷۱"

In the second sense, it is the ultimate goal of gnosis, which is achieved subsequent to faith. That is, when

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one attains certainty that there is nothing except God, the Exalted, and His effusion in the realm of being, and that His effusion, too, has no independent being of itself, .turning away from all plurality he considers ail as one and sees all as one

Thus making all one, he passes within his soul from the station of "He is One and there is none that may share with Him in divinity" (وحده لا ـ شريك له فى الإلهيه). to the station of "He is One and there is none that may share with Him in Being" (وحده لا شريك له فى الوجود)

In this station, other than God becomes a veil for him, and attention to other than God is considered by him to be absolute shirk, and he proclaims with the tongue of his :being

إِنِّى وَجَّهْتُ وَجْهِىَ لِلَّذِى فَطَرَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ حَنِيفًا وَمَا أَنَا مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ

Lo! I have turned my face towards Him Who created the heavens and the earth, as" (one of pure faith, and I am not of the idolaters." (۶:۷۹

Section Five: On Ittihad

:God, the Exalted and the Glorious says

وَلَا تَدْعُ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَٰهًا آخَرَ لَا إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ...

(Therefore, invoke not with God another god, there is no god except Him ...." (۲۸:۸۸"

Tawhid means `making one' and ittihad means `becoming one with.' There, it is "Set not up with God another god," and here, "Invoke not with God another god," for there .is a trace of constraint [in tawhid] which is absent in ittihad

Hence when the unity becomes

p: ۶۰

absolute and established within the inner self, so that there is no attention .whatsoever to duality, one would attain to ittihad

Ittihad is not what some shortsighted people imagine, that it is the becoming one of Greatly exalted is He above` تعالى الله عن ذلك علوا كبيرا the creature with God, the Exalted '!that

Rather, it means seeing all as Him, without being constrained to say that everything .other than Him is from Him and so all are one

Rather, his vision is so illumined with the light of His manifestation, Exalted is His station, that he does not see other than Him, there remaining no seer, seen, or sight, .and all become one

:The prayer of Mansur, Husayn Hallaj

بينى وبينك إنى ينازعنى فارفع بفضلك إنيى من البين

,Between me and Thee, my `Iness' contends with me

(So, with Thy grace, remove my `Iness' from in between, (۱

:was granted and his egohood was removed from in between, until he could say

أنا من أهوى ومن أهوى أنا

.I am the One that I love and the One I love is Me

I am the Truth" and the "(أنا الحق) At this stage, it is known that the one who declared one who said, "Glory be to Me, how great is My majesty," did not claim divinity but negated his egohood and affirmed the ipseity of Someone other than himself, and this .is the desired goal

Section Six: On Wahdah

:God, the Glorious, said

لِّمَنِ الْمُلْكُ الْيَوْمَ ۖ لِلَّهِ الْوَاحِدِ الْقَهَّارِ

Whose is the sovereignty"

p: ٦١

Sayyid Haydar al-Amuli, Jami' al-asrar, p. ٣٦٤. The following version of the couplet is -١ given by Mirsad al-'ibad (Tehran: Bungah-e Tarjumeh wa Nashr), p. ٣٢٣: بينى وبينك إنى ينازعنى فارفع بفضلك إنيى من البين In Al-Khwarazmi's Sharh F usus al-hikam, p. ٩۴, the following :version appears

(this day? It is God's, the One, the Omnipotent." (۴٠:١٦

Wahdah is unity, and this is above ittihad, for ittihad which means becoming one-smells of plurality, which is not there in wahdah. There, movement and rest, contemplation and remembrance, wayfaring and journey, deficiency and perfection, :[the distinctions of] seeking, the seeker and the sought-all vanish, and

إذا بلغ الكلام إلى الله فامسكوا

(When the discourse reaches God, stop! (١

On Fana

:God, the Exalted, says

كُلُّ شَيْءٍ هَالِكٌ إِلَّا وَجْهَهُ

(Everything is to perish except His Face." (۲۸:۸۸"

In wahdah there is no wayfarer or wayfaring, way and destination, search, seeker, and the sought, and everything perishes except His Face. This matter has neither an affirmation and its explanation, nor a negation and its explanation; for affirmation and .negation are opposites and duality is the source of multiplicity

Here there is neither negation nor affirmation, neither negation of negation nor affirmation of affirmation, neither negation of affirmation nor affirmation of negation. And this is called land' (annihilation), for the return of creation is by land' even as its :(origin was from `adam (non-existence

كَمَا بَدَأَكُمْ تَعُودُونَ...

(As He brought you into being, so shall you return." (۷:۲۹"

:The term fana' has a meaning that is coextensive with multiplicity

كُلُّ مَنْ عَلَيْهَا فَانٍ وَيَبْقَىٰ وَجْهُ رَبِّكَ ذُو الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ

Everyone that is thereon will perish and there remaineth the Face of thy Lord, the All-" .(majestic, the All-generous." (۵۵:۲۶-۲۷

This is not the sense of fana' [meant here], for it is beyond anything that can be said, :imagined, and intellected

إِلَيْهِ يُرْجَعُ الْأَمْرُ كُلُّهُ...

To Him reverts"

۱- Bihar al-anwar, vol ۳, p. ۲۵۹. بینی وبینک انی ینازعنی فارفع بلطف اننی من البین

(the matter in its entirety." (۱۱:۱۲۳

.This is what we wished to proffer in this brief discourse, which concludes here

والسلام على من اتبع الهدى, سبحان ربك رب العزه عما يصفون, والسلام على المرسلين, والحمد لله رب العالمين, والصلاه والسلام على سيدنا محمد وآله الطاهرين الطيبين الذين هم نقلوا من أصلاب الطاهرين إلى أرحام المطهرات والذين أذهب الله عنهم الرجس وطهرهم تطهيرا

Peace be upon him who follows guidance. Thy Lord, the Lord of Honour, is above) what they ascribe to Him, and peace be upon the Messengers, and praise be to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds, and peace and benedictions be upon our master, Muhammad, and the pure and immaculate ones of his Household, who (prior to their birth) were carried from pure loins to pure wombs, and from whom God has kept away all (.impurity and purified them with a thorough purification

About center

In the name of Allah

هَلْيَسْتَوِيالَّذِينَيَعْلَمُونَوَالَّذِينَلَايَعْلَمُونَ

?Are those who know equal to those who do not know

al-Zumar: ۹

:Introduction

Ghaemiyeh Computer Research Institute of Isfahan, from ۲۰۰۷, under the authority of Ayatollah Haj SayyedHasanFaqihImami (God blesses his soul), by sincere and daily efforts of university and seminary elites and sophisticated groups began its activities .in religious, cultural and scientific fields

:Manifesto

Ghaemiyeh Computer Research Institute of Isfahan in order to facilitate and

accelerate the accessibility of researchers to the books and tools of research, in the field of Islamic science, and regarding the multiplicity and dispersion of active centers in this field

and numerous and inaccessible sources by a mere scientific intention and far from any kind of social, political, tribal and personal prejudices and currents, based on performing a project in the shape of (management of produced and published works from all Shia centers) tries to provide a rich and free collection of books and research papers for the experts, and helpful contents and discussions for the educated generation and all classes of people interested in reading, with various formats in the .cyberspace

:Our Goals are

(propagating the culture and teachings of Thaqalayn (Quran and Ahlulbayt p.b.u.t-

encouraging the populace particularly the youth in investigating the religious issues-

replacing useful contents with useless ones in the cellphones, tablets and computers-

providing services for seminary and university researchers-

spreading culture study in the publich-

paving the way for the publications and authors to digitize their works-

:Policies

acting according to the legal licenses-

relationship with similar centers-

avoiding parallel working-

merely presenting scientific contents-

mentioning the sources-

.It's obvious that all the responsibilities are due to the author

:Other activities of the institute

Publication of books, booklets and other editions-

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.Producing animations, computer games and etc-

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Launching the system of answering religious, ethical and doctrinal questions-

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Holding virtual educational courses for the public-

Holding virtual teacher-training courses-

Producing thousands of research software in three languages (Persian, Arabic and- English) which can be performed in computers, tablets and cellphones and available and downloadable with eight international formats: JAVA, ANDROID, EPUB, CHM, PDF, HTML, CHM, GHB on the website

Also producing four markets named "Ghaemiyeh Book Market" with Android, IOS,- WINDOWS PHONE and WINDOWS editions

:Appreciation

We would appreciate the centers, institutes, publications, authors and all honorable .friends who contributed their help and data to us to reach the holy goal we follow

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